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## NOTES.

### CICERO'S JUDGMENT OF LUCRETIVS.

*Lucreti poemata ut scribis ita sunt multis luminibus ingeni multae tamen artis. Sed cum veneris* (ad Quint. frat. II 9, 3).

It had seemed as if pretty general agreement had at length been reached concerning this passage in an interpretation somewhat as follows: "The criticism of Quintus with which Cicero expresses his accord was that Lucretius had not only much of the *genius* which characterized the older Latin poets (as Ennius or Accius), but also much of the *art* of the new school (so essentially Tyrrell ad loc. following a suggestion of Munro)." The word which has caused difficulty is *tamen*. For while it is true that in ancient as well as modern usage there is a frequent antithesis between *ingenium* and *ars*, yet it did not seem clear why this antithesis should be emphasized if both are accorded to Lucretius. For this reason it was felt that one or the other quality was denied to him, and therefore *non* was inserted either before *multis* or *multae*, or the antithesis was eliminated by changing *tamen* to *etiam*. But agreement was never reached in any of these suggestions and opinion had apparently begun to crystallize in the interpretation of the text as given above.

Professor F. Marx, however, in a valuable article on Lucretius in the *Neue Jahrbücher* for 1899 (Vol. III, p. 536) goes back to < *non* > *multis* and Mr. Saintsbury, in his recent volume on the History of Literary Criticism (p. 215), does likewise, selecting with rather palpable partizanship the form which will yield the most effective condemnation of Cicero for failing to recognize the genius whose fate had been entrusted to his keeping. This wavering in a conclusion which had begun to seem fixed has made me bold to advance a view of this passage which has always seemed to me the natural one, but which has not, to my knowledge, been advocated publicly.

The text I accept as sound, but I would look upon *tamen*, not as marking the antithesis between *ingenium* and *ars*, but as indicating the point at which Cicero dissents from the judgment of

Quintus—that is, in contrast to *ita*. The form of expression is a familiar one, but an example may not be superfluous: *fac ita esse; tamen hoc ferendum nullo modo est* (Cic. Verr. II 141). And so in our passage the relation is *ita sunt . . . tamen*, and not *ingeni . . . tamen artis*, as is assumed by Tyrrell (*supra*) and others, and recently by Norden (*Antike Kunstprosa*, Vol. I, p. 182), who cites a parallel usage from Seneca Rhet.<sup>1</sup> Apparently Quintus had written that the verses of Lucretius were characterized by *multis luminibus ingeni*, and had either expressed the opinion or implied that they lacked in *ars*. Cicero writes in reply: Lucreti poemata ut scribis ita sunt *multis luminibus ingeni*, so far agreeing with his brother and quoting his words; but he adds in dissent *multae tamen artis*. That there was disagreement between the two in some respect is suggested by the words which follow: *Sed cum veneris*—‘but we’ll discuss the matter more fully when you come.’<sup>2</sup> Apart from the objection to *tamen* which others have felt, it would seem to me unnatural that Cicero should repeat verbatim or essentially the judgment of Quintus unless it were to express a partial dissent from it, to which, as has been said, the succeeding words point. Finally, the formula of partial agreement and exception, *ita . . . sed* or *tamen*, is so common that it seems to me a Roman reader must have grouped the words together in this manner most naturally.

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#### CICERO AD ATTICUM.

The postal facilities of ancient Rome were precarious at best, and it seems quite clear that Roman ideas concerning the inviolability of private letters were very much less strict than ours. We should therefore expect to find Roman letter-writers resorting to all manner of devices to render their private correspondence unintelligible to prying eyes, and there is plenty of testimony to the fact that they did so. In Cicero’s case, we have his own explicit statements. So (Ep. ad Att. II 20. 3) *de re publica breviter ad te*

<sup>1</sup>Controv. Praef. I 17: *memoria ei natura quidem felix, plurimum tamen arte adiuta.*

<sup>2</sup>For this interpretation and punctuation of the text, which is obviously correct, cf. F. Marx, *Berl. Ph. Woch.*, 1891, col. 835. A passage of similar import and brevity of expression I owe to my colleague, Professor W. G. Hale, *Ad fam. XII 1, 2*: *Verum haec propediem et multa alia coram.*